



## *The Public Service Commission State of South Carolina*

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Comer H. "Randy" Randall  
Chairman

Phone: (803) 896-5100  
Fax: (803) 896-5188

March 18, 2020

The Honorable Harvey S. Peeler, Jr.  
*President of the South Carolina Senate*  
213 Gressette Building  
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

The Honorable James H. "Jay" Lucas  
*Speaker of the South Carolina House of  
Representatives*  
506 Blatt Building  
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

The Honorable Thomas C. Alexander  
*Chairman, State Regulation of Public Utilities  
Review Committee*  
*Chairman, Senate Labor, Commerce and  
Industry Committee*  
313 Gressette Building  
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

The Honorable William E. Sandifer, III  
*Vice-Chairman, State Regulation of Public  
Utilities Review Committee*  
*Chairman, House Labor, Commerce and  
Industry Committee*  
407 Blatt Building  
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

The Honorable Luke A. Rankin, Sr.  
*Chairman, Senate Judiciary Committee*  
101 Gressette Building  
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

The Honorable Peter M. McCoy, Jr.  
*Chairman, House Judiciary Committee*  
512 Blatt Building  
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

Dear Gentlemen:

As we are all aware, the COVID-19 pandemic has had devastating public health and economic effects on our State. The Public Service Commission of South Carolina (the "Commission"), in recognition of these effects, respectfully asks for the General Assembly to pass a Joint Resolution to temporarily stay S.C. Code Ann. Sections 58-5-240 and 58-27-870, including all deadlines for currently pending matters and for any cases which may be filed during this time. The Joint Resolution should provide for a period time following the end of these public health and economic emergencies for these two statutory provisions to restart (i.e., two-week or 30-day period following the end of states of emergency) when these states of emergency end and the citizens of the State are recovering from these unexpected health and economic stresses. It is impossible to know the exact length of time needed. However, reviewing similar matters before other state Commissions, a two to six-month stay is a reasonable period of time due to these unprecedented events.

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These statutes require the issuance of rate orders in two major water and wastewater cases presently before the Commission as well as other possible impending rate cases. The potential combined financial impact of these rate cases affects citizens all over the state. In this time of unprecedented emergency and dire economic uncertainty regarding the COVID-19 pandemic, it is the Commission's opinion that ratepayers should not be burdened with any additional concern related to these matters.

Under Section 58-5-240, the six-month deadline may impact customers' rates as soon as April 2, 2020. There are pending water and wastewater rate cases touching thousands of households and businesses spread throughout sixteen (16) counties in the state. Affected territories extend from the Upstate through the Piedmont, Midlands, and the Coast. Additional time is requested to delay the potential impact of these matters. Moreover, the Commission is facing the possibility of prospective rate cases from additional public utilities. Without this stay, the Commission does not have the authority to hold these matters in abeyance past the statutory deadlines.

Understanding that the Governor's emergency powers may have time limitations, we are also requesting the Governor invoke his emergency powers which would recognize these same issues and delay the six-month deadline for issuance of Orders under S.C. Code Sections 58-5-240 and 58-27-870. On behalf of the Commission, I ask that the Commission be allowed to delay the implementation of the referenced statutes as outlined above and any resulting Order, so that ratepayers will be spared the possible economic effects in these troubled times.

I, and the other Members of the Public Service Commission of South Carolina, thank you in advance for your attention and consideration in these matters.

Sincerely,



Comer H. "Randy" Randall  
Chairman

Cc: The Honorable Henry McMaster, Governor  
The Honorable C. Bradley Hutto (510 Gressette Building)  
The Honorable David J. Mack, III (328-D Blatt Building)  
The Honorable P. Michael "Mike" Forrester (402-B Blatt Building)  
Margaret Bluestein, Esquire  
Dan Jones  
John S. Simmons, Esquire